1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

physical environment. To follow the story of village life in Greece as portrayed in this book, one must be able to go imaginatively from one part of Greece to another, since every experience described will be related to the place where it occurred.

Macedonia, linked historically with Alexander the Great and the missionary activities of St. Paul, is a part of the administrative division of Northern Greece. Its northern mountain barrier separates it from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, each of which has adjoining territory which it too calls Macedonia. The Greeks believe that no area has been more bled over than Macedonia, where Greek and Slav meet.

Thrace, to the east, is also in Northern Greece and is the one area where the Turkish minority still live. Like Macedonia, it is famous for the Oriental kind of tobacco grown there.

Epirus, the northwestern province, is a mountainous land of great beauty and stormy traditions. It borders Albania.

Thessaly, south of Macedonia, boasts Mount Olympus and fertile plains which produce a fifth of the country's wheat.

Central Greece, stretching from the Ionian to the Aegean Seas, holds many tourist attractions such as Thebes, Delphi, and Athens. It also includes the slender island of Euboea along its eastern flank.

The Peloponnesos, separated from the rest of mainland Greece by the Corinth Canal, is an archaeologist's paradise. It is important agriculturally as well as being intimately connected with Greece's liberation from Turkey in 1829.

In addition to these regions on the mainland there are five island groupings in the Greek kingdom:

The Aegean Islands hug the coast of Turkey. Lesbos is the largest, Chios perhaps the best known.

The Dodecanese Islands, to the southeast of the mainland, came under Greek control after World War II with the defeat of the Italians. Rhodes, the chief island, is one of the major tourist attractions of the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Cyclades Islands are also to the southeast of, but nearer to, mainland Greece. Tinos, one of these islands, is the site of a miracle-working shrine visited by thousands of visitors every year on the Day of the Assumption.

Crete stands alone. Its civilization predates that of the mainland. Because of its better soil, more of its people are interested in farming than in fishing or shipping.

The Ionian Islands, on the west coast of Greece, were the hardest hit in the devastating earthquakes of August 1953. They include the beautiful island of Corfu, which was not damaged, as well as Ithaca, home of Odysseus.

These regions, particularly those of the mainland, will be more than names on the map as one becomes familiar with the peasants who dwell in them and with many of the natural features associated with the mountains, the plains, and the sea.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

take anything else with him, he took off his cloak and filled it with straw. As he hurried away in his rush and fright the straw bit by bit fell on the road and became stars. When he got to his house his robe was empty and behind him followed the monks. Since then we call these stars the priest's straw.

Rain. When summer has come to an end and fall is there we pick our grapes and harvest our maize and are waiting for God to send rain so that we can sow our wheat. The first rains start in mid-October. . . . They start either with a slow modest rain or sometimes with a strong one. The strong rain starts abruptly and all hell lets loose. The sky meets with the earth. Lightning, thunder, wind, hell. We all run with our hoes to hold the water back from entering our homes; others run to pull their animals out of ravines so that the water does not carry them away. Others gather the things that have remained outside, and others shelter themselves in their homes and gaze at the storm from their windows. When the weather turns good again it is the joy of God. Then we get ready our agricultural equipment for the field; it is time to sow. Rain is our life. Without it nothing grows; we are lost. But the rain can also do harm. When it rains suddenly the rivers come down with a rush carrying things and destroying our fields. It carries many rocks and stones onto the plain; when it rains and blows, it's hell. It throws down the wheat and it does a lot of damage. A good rain is a slow one. . . .

But nature is more than a collection of stars or plants or animals. It represents the forces against which man must contend as he seeks to wrest his living from the soil; nature brings disasters to which man must adjust even though he does not completely reconcile himself to his misfortune.

One type of catastrophe that visits Greece at frequent intervals is the earthquake, which comes usually in the late spring and summer. Wherever a person travels in Central Greece, Thessaly, or the Peloponnesos, he hears of the damage done by tremors. There is today an Old Corinth and a New Corinth, the latter being built after the old city was destroyed in 1858. New Corinth was once more destroyed in 1928 and rebuilt. In one village people still talk with sadness of a quake which occurred in 1875, killing forty-seven women and children inside the church. One of the most damaging earthquakes of recent memory was the August 1953 series of tremors in the Ionian Islands which destroyed so much of Cephalonia, Zante, and Ithaca. In April and May of 1954, more than thirty persons were killed in the quakes of Thessaly, three hundred injured, and thirty-two thousand made homeless.

Nature shows its unkindness in other ways. Sudden hailstorms, drought, and insect pests take their annual toll in many parts of Greece. While on a trip with the inspector of agriculture from Larissa, Thessaly, through some fields recently damaged by a storm, I asked him what the peasants thought of such a devastating rain. He said that they did not feel any enmity against the elements but do say in all seriousness to them "na se pare ho diavolos!" (may the devil take you!)

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

178 241 main crop because the peasant can harvest them before the great heat of summer descends and the countryside lies parched and torpid under the blazing sun.

Land Reform (Thessaly)

423 Attica was selected as the best illustration of land ownership in Greece, but Thessaly, with the richest land in Greece, almost selects itself to illustrate modern Greek land reform.[11] The size of the farm holding in Thessaly averages just over eleven acres, which is the highest of any province: the figure is less than ten acres in Macedonia, Thrace, and Central Greece; just over five acres in Epirus and the Peloponnesos; and less than five acres on the islands. No wonder that now and then I encountered what can best be termed "land-hungry peasants," particularly where they thought that the government, through its program of land redistribution, was in a position to turn over to them at a reasonable figure the fields of some estate not yet fully reduced to the proper size set by the land-reform law.

[241]

This was the case in 1953 in Thomai, a village not far from Larissa, the capital city of Thessaly. I was driving the director of agriculture in Larissa out on his inspection trip through the neighboring area where a severe rainstorm had damaged the nearly ripe wheat. The road, stretching for miles between grain fields, was headed in the direction of Trikkala and passed the Larissa Forest Nursery, whose sign linked it with the Marshall Plan. Farther on, in recently harvested grain fields, a few gleaners were bending over the golden stubble in the hot sun, gathering their winter's bread supply like Ruth who gleaned in the fields of Boaz. In rich Thessaly, there are few gleaners now, but the unwritten law permitting gleaning still exists for those poor villagers who need it.

[177] [243] [735] [671]

During the drive the discussion centered about the problem of land reform. The director was reluctant to visit Thomai because he had not yet received any final instructions from Athens to help him answer the questions he knew the villagers would ask about some promised increase in their land. The Land Reform Law of 1917 had boldly attacked the problem of the big estates, and its gradual application had eliminated tenancy throughout most of Greece by 1930. Around 1922 the influx of refugees, with their desperate need for land, speeded up the redistribution. This law still permitted certain classes of landlords to hold up to 500 acres although requiring them to dispose of acreages above that amount. As the result of further government action in 1952, the archbishop of the national church had agreed to the sale of the monastery estates, which accounted for a little more than one fourth of the 1.5 million acres to be turned over to private proprietors in this new redistribution program. Another type of landlord living in Larissa had formerly owned about half of the rich Thessaly plain; he had given up most of the land, keeping the 500-acre maximum holding.

423 427 [671] [792]

1:Sanders Z-5/4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

they had a resilience that kept them going. When asked how their tobacco crop was doing, they broke into broad smiles, and the man said:

"This year our tobacco is just like basil." (By this they meant that it was nice, thick, and round.)

The woman was quick to add, "ho Theos na dosi" (may God grant it).

In a book of interpretations there is a temptation to linger with a couple like this, to record in detail their simple ways which contrast so markedly with the complicated life in the West. The temptation is even stronger when one encounters throughout Greece peasants who are as far removed from mechanization as the Acropolis is removed from the Empire State Building. The late Robert P. T. Coffin, during a year in Greece, caught their spirit in "The Golden Age," which begins:

> High in the back mountains of old Greece
> I came upon incredible peace;
> A wife with a distaff twisting wool
> A boy who filled wool breeches full,
> Riding together on a burro
> Ahead of a bronze man running a furrow
> On a steep acre mostly rocks,
> Twenty red hens, and two bronze cocks.[8]

Yet there is a spirit of change stirring in Greece that cannot be ignored no matter how strongly one may be drawn to the simplicity of the past. To drive along the road just south of Corinth and to see a new bright orange tractor plowing in the shadow of Akrokorinthos, with its lofty crown of crenelated medieval ruins on the summit, is a startling sensation; or between Levadeia and Lamia in Central Greece, to come suddenly upon a combine efficiently working its way through a wheat field with Mount Parnassus, the home of the Muses, as a backdrop, is to be jolted momentarily by the incongruities of an invasion by the machines into an ancient world which for ages had moved in the pattern of man, land, and animals.

The swiftly changing techniques are illustrated vividly on almost any day's tour through the countryside. At threshing time, for instance, I have seen peasants threshing grain by putting it into a bag and pounding it with sticks; not far away will be several threshing floors on the edge of the village with many teams of horses tramping out the grain; elsewhere there will be the slow-moving oxen pulling a little platform with metal teeth fixed underneath to separate the grain from the stalk; and around the next bend may be a big cooperatively owned threshing machine operated by a long belt turned by a tractor. Tired women, faces veiled with white scarves against the scorching heat and dust, stand feeding the broken sheaves into the thresher; other women sack the grain for the sweating men to carry away in trucks. In the memory of the traveler the impression of fierce heat and

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

243 178 exhaustion hangs over the incessant labor of these peasants through the fields of Greece at threshing time. And when the onlooker finally sees the combine doing all of the operations at once, he experiences a feeling of relief. It is as if the accumulated work and sweat of centuries begins to be removed from the people who struggle for their bread.

[241] [311] [406] [462] Mechanization has begun to do miracles in the waste lands of Greece as well. One of the agricultural achievements since the war has been the drainage of marshlands by gigantic earth-moving machinery and dredges, thus putting large acreages under rice cultivation for the first time. Here the machine is a mixed blessing, for where rice growing has come with its promise of higher income for the people, it has also meant much heavier burdens for the women to whose lot falls the new task of planting the rice and cultivating it while the men give the orders and manipulate the flow of water.

178 312 241 406 [433] The machine age has also brought pumps: not the kind powered by blindfolded donkeys or by tired human feet, but the kind that are run by gas engines or, in some places, by electricity. First, heavy drills operated by a semigovernment agency reach down for the water and, when it is found, the pumps are installed. The water is channeled into thirsty cotton fields and vegetable gardens to help raise the agricultural production of Greece up to as much as 37 percent over prewar figures.

241 422 178 Around Larissa, in Thessaly, on the trip with the director of agriculture and on other trips through that area, I had seen the great concentration of mechanized equipment which contrasted sharply with many other areas of Greece where peasants found it hard to get even iron plowshares or new hoes or sickles. In this mechanized area I talked with a man who bought a [407] [452] [464] tractor. Alekos was his name. This is what he told me: "Three years ago I bought a tractor on the installment plan. The first year I did very well, for I could do work for my neighbors after I finished my own work and they paid me a good income. Now six of my neighbors have tractors; owning one is like a craze and I do not have so much work to do for others."

[243] Alekos went on to describe how the wheat of his village had been threshed by machinery since 1925, each farmer bringing his grain to the place where the thresher had been set up, but nobody locally had owned a tractor and the thresher had come in from outside. Since the war, however, [554] tractors had become so popular that they were symbols of social prestige. We told Alekos that we had been much amused by the sight of the peasants going to market in town with their families aboard the tractors and wondered if the higher the tractor the greater the prestige. He smiled and said:

> That is partly true but in the beginning only those who had 250 acres of land could buy a tractor and they needed a medium rather than a small tractor. Now anybody can buy a tractor who can afford one and will try to get one as good as his neighbor's.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

of Alekos, the first few owners get good income from custom plowing, but with many tractors there is not very much supplementary income to go around. These steel horses in Greece plow more deeply, give more leisure, help spread scientific farming throughout the plains, and service an increasingly larger proportion of the 950,000 farms of the land. But with one tractor to every 70–80 farms, it is not surprising that Yannes, the tobacco grower from Alistrate, still waits for his horse so that he will not have to stand idly by while another finishes plowing a field.

The Harvesters of Chalkidike (Macedonia)

Social changes, and especially those connected with mechanization, frequently wear two faces — one bright, the other dark. In Athens I had heard from fellow Americans about the growing use of machinery, the previously mentioned over-all increase in agricultural production to more than 37 percent above the prewar figure, and the steps being taken to rationalize agriculture to an even greater degree. These programs represented not only heavy investments of dollars and drachmas, but also considerable self-sacrifice on the part of American and Greek staff members with a missionary zeal for their work and a willingness to work overtime. There was no question of the need for Greece to become a part of the scientific revolution in farming, but it was at times perplexing to find that little thought was being given to the social effects of this revolution on the people in the rural areas.

Once out in the provinces, away from the bright programs of Athens, I saw the dark face of mechanization. While riding with the director of agriculture of Larissa on the drive previously mentioned, I was somewhat shocked to hear him say that he was glad the recent storm had visited the area.

"Why is that?" I asked. "Doesn't it make it harder to harvest the grain?"

"Yes, that's the point," he replied. "Now it will have to be done by hand in many places, giving work to some of the people from the mountain villages in this area who depend upon the harvesting to earn their supply of wheat for much of the year. Without the bread from this wheat they cannot live."

Again, a nomarch of Thessalonike talked to me of the people displaced by mechanization. He tried to see the good as well as the bad, indicating that machines without any question had raised the yields by putting more land under cultivation and by making better farming methods possible. He, too, however, used much the same words as had the official in Larissa, pointing out that he was glad to see the rains in Macedonia since it meant that harvesting would be done by hand.[6]

One bright June morning found us in Niketas, a small coastal village in Chalkidike where mechanical threshing was in progress on the edge of the

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Macedonia

village. We hired a caique, with both sails and motor, to take us on the three-hour trip to Neos Marmaras, a picturesque refugee village. Hardly were we aboard when a group of excited peasants came to ask if they could go with us. Our one crewman seemed to have no objection so we told them to join us.

Almost at once these lively individuals explained that they were from the village of Parthenon. They had been spending the past twenty-five days helping the peasants around Niketas harvest their grain and were no longer needed now that threshing had begun. Before talking about their work, however, we had to exchange the rites of hospitality. We had spread out a blanket on which we placed a large piece of bread bought just before departure and a portion of white cheese given me by the teacher in the village. Although the peasants looked thin and hungry, they refused our food. One man, carefully eyeing our bread, said, "Here, take some of my bread; yours isn't well done."

Six or seven of the people of Parthenon, sprawled around the blanket while we ate, tried politely to hide their curiosity. Our lunch finished and the purpose of our trip explained to them several times, it became our turn to ask them questions. We started with a woman in her thirties, a widow. She was dressed in a poor cotton dress, was barefoot, wore a kerchief on her head, but her proud look and direct answers were those of an independent spirit. She was obviously very anxious to get back to Parthenon and several times expressed her gratitude for the lift. "Thank you very much. You have saved us four or five hours of walking on this warm day." She had had to leave her four children at home twenty-five days ago and had had no word from them since then, even though her village was only a relatively few kilometers away. Apparently she had gone on working in the harvest fields for winter bread, clinging to the belief that "no news was good news," but her drawn face showed her long concern: "I left them with only a piece of bread to eat. I don't know how they made out."

"How old are your children?"

"My eldest child is fifteen, the next is eleven, and the other two quite young."

"Does the fifteen-year-old take care of the rest while you are away?"

"He would if he could, but he must look after the cows of my brother who is a soldier, and so the eleven-year-old takes care of the younger two."

We learned that there were some relatives living in the village who probably kept an eye on the youngsters but did not assume full responsibility for them.

We were told that these villagers did not look forward to this trip. It is a trial, an ordeal that must be endured if they are to have any bread, for the men cannot find work in Parthenon that will provide them with money to buy bread.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Macedonia

243 466 "You ought to come harvesting and stay with us for a week and you would have plenty of material for your book," said one of the men good-naturedly. "When working in the wheat we sleep in the fields with only a blanket for a bed. It has been raining and we have been wet through and through. We can't wash ourselves, we can't even wash our plates — we are so busy."

243 "Where do you get your food?"

465 "The person for whom we work feeds us. He gives us garlic, olives, bread, salted fish, and sometimes a bean soup or potatoes. We all lose [262] weight during this period and wish we didn't have to work this way."

"Are you well paid for your work?"

One of the men, unshaven and tired, but gay throughout the conversation, said that the average pay was about 10 okas of grain for 1 stremma of land (28 pounds for one fourth of an acre). A man might get 14 okas and [562] a woman as low as 7 okas, but the average ran about 10. There was no explanation for this different treatment of the sexes except that the bargaining position of the woman was lower. (I compared this figure of 10 okas with the 20 okas that the farmers of Thessaly paid a combine owner for each stremma of land harvested, while they had to pay 30 okas per stremma when the harvesting was done by hand, losing about 10 okas through this less efficient way. Out of the total yield of 150 to 200 okas per stremma in Thessaly, the cost amounted to 7 to 10 percent of the crop in the case of the machine and 15 to 20 percent in the case of hand harvesting.)

511 "Do you get enough wheat during the harvesting period to see you through the year?"

"It all depends. Some years we do and some years we don't. Bread is our only food. It is our milk, cheese, butter, honey, sugar, all in one. What the grass is to the animal, bread is to us. Otherwise we live on air and water."

511 773 Then, as though carried away with some of their troubles, one of the men asked, "Do you know what we say about our village of Parthenon? We say that when Christ walked by our village he left us a curse, for we have only stones there." Another added a variation, "Yes, when Christ passed he blessed what was on his right, but on his left he threw stones." Even this rationalization had no trace of bitterness, but a matter-of-factness that was supposed to help the foreigner understand why they were having difficulties with food. Other villages down on the plains had an easier time of it, but Parthenon, high on its rocks, had to make a living the hard way.

243 465 Coming back to the question of harvesting, we asked them when they would get their wheat, for they were carrying nothing but a woven handbag or a spare jacket. In about a month they would return, for then the grain would be threshed and ready to distribute. Each person had carried his

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Macedonia

own tape to measure just how much he had harvested so there was little likelihood that they would be short-changed. "But don't you often work as a group in a field? How do you measure the individual share in that case?" "Then the owner will say that the field is twenty stremmas in size and that he will give so much per person per stremma for doing that field. An agreement is reached and we all get to work." When they return for their wheat they will have to find some way — by donkey and by caique — of getting it back to their village on the heights overlooking the sea.

It seems that the people of Parthenon do not follow any set pattern in late May or early June when they go to help with the harvest. Individuals or small family groups are independently "on their own"; they go wherever there seems to be a demand for their services; and each individual, a woman as well as a man, is entitled to keep or dispose of the grain earned as he sees fit. In some mountain villages where there are many unmarried girls they often are sent by the families to do this work and are expected to bring back their earnings to the family. Groups of such young people always have a festival air lacking when the middle-aged people have to leave their home village and put in long hours in the field. "We also work with the moon," interjected one of the women who had said little up to that point, indicating that working hours were not from sun to sun but went on far into the night as long as people could see. And light was necessary, for there was danger of accident when wielding the razor-sharp sickles which each worker provided for himself.

There was a crescendo of excitement as we approached Neos Marmaras, our destination. The peasants could see their village of Parthenon far away on the slopes above. They pointed it out to us, asked us to come and visit them and, when we were forced to decline, thanked us profusely for the wonderful favor we had done them. As usual, they had no idea of the help they had rendered me in trying to understand the economic significance to them of this annual trek to the plain to help with the harvest. When mechanization runs its full course and the bulk of the grain is harvested by combines, these people will face the problem that now confronts many thousands of village families in the mountains bordering Thessaly where their services are no longer needed.

Social change is inevitable in the face of an ever-expanding industrial revolution that reaches even to the isolated mountain valleys of ancient Greece. We can only hope that along with the spread of mechanization there will be imaginative social policies to keep man the master rather than the victim of the machine, taking into account the inevitable shifts in type of labor and sources of income in areas where hand labor is no longer needed. The peasants of Greece, with their readiness to tackle whatever is new, would be the last to want to turn back the clock, but they do have a right to wonder where they are to get their bread.

1:Sanders Z-5,N (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

local customs in this regard — and they are asserting themselves throughout the land — then others will follow as the old people shake their heads and lecture those in their own home with varying success.

In following up the inquiry about mate selection we stopped one day near Marathon. There in the hot summer sun three unmarried girls were harvesting wheat. With great dexterity they held the stalks in one hand and cut them with a slicing motion of the sickle held in the other. Two of the girls were sisters and the third was a first cousin, and this was their uncle's field. They expected to be paid a little over a dollar a day.

"What will happen to the money?"

"It will go into our dowry. We'll give it to our mother who takes care of it and knows what to buy. Of course, when she's short of money for coffee and sugar she will go nibble from the dowry money. We do our own dowries on the loom. We weave, sell the cloth, and then buy underclothes from the city."

"If you are working outside, how can you do your weaving for the dowry?"

"Our mothers may do it. An older sister may weave for herself and a younger sister working outside."

But we were interested in the girls' marriage plans. In their village they make use of the *proxenetra,* or marriage broker, when this is necessary.[4] But often the girls become known in other villages where their former friends or cousins are married and now live. One of these married cousins will say to an eligible bachelor: "I know just the girl for you back in my home village." She will then describe the girl, perhaps show pictures of her, and seek to interest him in her. One of the girls said, "I don't have much dowry but the boy came and asked for me anyway." We asked her what dowry she had. She will get fields and, since her sister and she are the only children in the family, whoever marries her is sure of at least half of her father's holdings. "So the groom will get a lot," we observed. "Oh, yes, and her name is already over the whole village" was the reply of the first cousin. One of the girls had been engaged for eighteen months and would marry in the fall. She would go to live with her husband's people.

A generation or so ago, parents had a decisive voice in the choice of mates, but times have changed greatly (though not completely). Answers to a question, put to young men in a group interview, as to how they would choose their wives ranged as follows:

Epirus: I will suggest to my parents the name of the girl I wish to marry. They will get information about her; if she has a good reputation and they agree, I will marry her. If they do not agree, I won't marry her.

Thasos (island off Thracian coast): If parents have any objection to the girl I pick and can give good reasons, then I won't marry her. If they don't have good reasons, I will marry her anyway.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

796 [787] whom they will marry. This is done by associating the verse being sung with the girl whose forfeit is drawn from the pitcher or jar at that particular time.

[771] To call attention, however, to the major holy days is to overlook the importance of the minor holy days in regulating much of the life of the older villager who is still apt to be tradition-bound. For example, on July 2, the [243] Day of the Virgin the Sheafbearer, many peasants will not harvest for fear that any sheaves they would gather would be destroyed by fire; or on [252] July 7, the Day of St. Kyriaki, peasant women in many parts of Greece [245] will not bake bread for fear that it will be eaten by snakes; or on July 17, *the Day of St. Marina*, the people go to the vineyards to collect grapes. On [782] this same day they may make a public sacrifice of a calf, letting the animal's blood run in a special ditch; they follow this sacrifice with a common meal. On July 20, the Day of the Prophet Elijah (Elias), there are also festivals and sacrifices, chiefly because so many churches are named in his honor. [821] Some people go to worship on the mountaintops; others try to foretell the weather since Elijah is associated with rain and thunder; and still others light fires on the mountainsides or in the villages.

[231] Thus one could run through each month. There are dates when livestock [357] owners can begin to let their animals pasture freely in fields and vineyards [675] (September 14), when master and servants are supposed to draw up the [241] contract between them (October 26), when the wine cask is to be opened (November 3 or 11), when agricultural work is to be finished for the year (November 14), when the fountain is to be fed with seeds (November 21), when the icons are to be dipped into the sea (December 6).[a] Each of these dates in and of itself is perhaps not very significant, for the taboos and customs are of a relatively simple sort; but they do illustrate the rich heritage of folklore which surrounds every village, day in and day out, and which adds to the color and vividness of rural life in Greece.

527 These saints' days also afford the basis for the custom of observing namedays. In Greece, a person and his family pay little attention to his birthday but make much of the day of the saint whose name he bears. In [782] Amphypolis, for instance, on a boy's nameday his parents will sacrifice a [535] lamb. They will sing and dance and afterwards feast on the lamb because, [574] as one village girl expressed it, "each boy belongs to a certain saint and the lamb is for the saint." Throughout Greece one visits a friend on his nameday, enjoys the good food that is served, and wishes the individual long life and happiness. In a village where there are many people named Constantine or George, people go from one party to another until they have had more than enough food and drink.

796 [785] The greatest holidays of the year are Christmas and Easter, with the latter being the more important. As a matter of fact, Christmas is only one part of the so-called Twelve Days (*Dodekaemeron*) between Christmas

1:Sanders Z-5# (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

474 [652] get a cooperative, we will have to wait a year to get a loan approved, and by that time we will have no need for the money." They thought that from 12 to 14 percent would be the customary interest charges set by the cooperative and the Bank and also assumed that security requirements would be very high.

[249] [664] [124] Peasants in the tobacco-growing areas in Northern Greece appreciated the fact that cooperatives there tried to introduce mechanization and also, from time to time, did some lobbying in their behalf. When in 1953 we asked the commandant of gendarmerie for Volos, who was in close touch with the villagers, about their views toward cooperatives he replied: "With the occupation and the war the cooperative conscience more or less disappeared. Now it is reviving and if things go normally there will be quick improvement. One reason for the difficulty is the effort by the government to mix politics in with the cooperative movement. Now the cooperatives undertake no teaching function. They did this before the war, which partially explained what success they achieved. Before the war, if a person wanted to be on the council of the cooperative, he had to go through special training. [634] The authorities say that they will do this again, but the Ministry of Agriculture is centering its teaching approach in the newly formed Agro Clubs."

He thought that in his area about 60 percent of the cooperatives were working and that 40 percent were either anemic or altogether defunct. [241] Around Volos the producers' and marketing cooperatives organized on a commodity basis — vegetables, dairy, fruit, olives — worked better than the general-purpose or purely credit type. Very often, he pointed out, the relationship between the local cooperative and the representatives of the Agricultural Bank is strained, for the local council will give inaccurate information to the Bank, saying that a would-be borrower has twelve acres of land when he really has only five. [652]

474 178 [621] One of the most interesting examples of the blending of traditional and modern mutual-aid practices was found in Kalivi, a village of about 2500 in Attica. This village owned some pasture land. In 1914 it formed a committee which took charge of the management of this community land, deriving revenues for the community. In 1920 there was talk of organizing a cooperative, but it did not really get under way until 1926, at which time the village pasture land was turned over to the cooperative which superseded the former committee. Thus, the transition from the older social form to the cooperative went smoothly. [652] The Agricultural Bank had helped the local people decide what was the best kind of cooperative organization for their purposes. They decided that membership should be compulsory for all family heads. In 1928 the cooperative acquired a threshing machine with the funds obtained from the pasture land. [243] This machine as well as newer ones were in use when I visited the village near the middle of June 1953. [293] [751] Organized pandemonium seemed to reign as new loads of wheat sheaves

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Kalivi, Attica

were fed to the threshing machine by the girls, who were wearing goggles and what seemed to be gas masks to protect them from the dust. The women also were wiring the bales of straw which were taken away to be stacked. The president of the community told me:

> Anyone who wants to work signs up. Every fifteen days we put on a new crew so that quite a few people are employed and paid. We do have to keep a small permanent crew on the job throughout the threshing season, which lasts about sixty days, but almost every family has a chance to get some benefit. We only do the wheat belonging to the people of our community. We determine by lot the order in which a family's wheat is to be threshed. All the people bring their grain here, for we can thresh it much more cheaply than they could do it with animals.

We then went into the large olive-pressing plant, built in 1948, with a loan of about $30,000 from the Agricultural Bank, and learned how this part of the cooperative's business was conducted. We learned that each family's batch of olives, like its wheat, was processed separately and that it gave 8 percent of the oil to the cooperative, which is a standard amount taken by presses over Greece, plus an extra 3 percent contribution until the machinery is paid for. After that, it will have to pay only 4 instead of the customary 8 percent. When I noticed an icon in the pressing plant, the manager said that they asked the priest in to bless their work at the beginning of the season. Another man in the company remarked, "we like our religion, but we don't like our priests," a comment with which the others seemed to agree.

The more I learned about this cooperative in Kalivi, the more I realized what a shrewd investment the pasture land had been. The cooperative accumulates no money for itself but reinvests all profits into public works or special funds as determined by the directors of the cooperative. For example, a doctor is paid out of a cooperative philanthropic fund in return for looking after the poor of the community free of charge.

In addition to this general cooperative, to which all family heads belong, there are in Kalivi five other cooperatives. First, there is the credit cooperative explained to me as follows: "Since many people here have to depend upon the Agricultural Bank for loans, the credit cooperative gets the money for them and they do not have to make the contact themselves. If a local peasant wants sulphur or insecticides, the cooperative gets all that is needed. The individual then owes the cost to the cooperative. He pays no membership dues. Both men and women belong." It so happened that the president and the secretary of the community, plus three other people, made up the five-man executive committee of this credit cooperative.

Second, there is a livestock cooperative which the owners of the five thousand sheep in the community support. The members number forty,

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

631 642 this is to be worked out puzzles Greek politicians as much as it does American politicians interested in United States counties, laid out in horse-and-buggy days and ill adapted to today's rapid-transit world. In any combination, one center will gain and the other lose, a fact which has local political repercussions in a democratic system. Some of these become apparent as one views the work of the community council and its president.

The Community Council

207 In Phrangista, a mountain village of Central Greece, I was shaken out of pleasant contemplation as two loudspeakers on the village square suddenly began to inform one and all of the latest news of the day.

275 243 247 This was in the spring of 1953, and we were on a coffeeshop verandah newly made of concrete. Across the dusty thoroughfare, some hens had discovered wheat sheaves drying in front of the house of the carpenter; next door, potted geraniums were blooming in the window of a handsome stone house. We were shut in from the outside world by hazy mountains.

262 The proprietor's wife and daughter had just brought us preserved walnut sweets in a spoon with the traditional glass of water. One spooned the sweets, gulped the water, and commented on the good flavor of the walnuts preserved before they had fully ripened. And then came the radio. These loudspeakers, sounding forth noon and evening, featured the broadcasts from Ioannina, Patras, and Athens. The radio, obviously much more powerful than the battery sets frequently encountered in the ordinary coffeehouse, aroused my curiosity. I turned to the president of the community council, who was sitting nearby. He told me that the radio was community-owned, that it had been placed there by the American Mission, and that it had "brought civilization" to that place. But the more I talked with him, the more I realized that bringing in civilization through this medium created some local administrative problems.

207 177 [422]

The American Mission, preferring to distribute the radio directly to the local authorities rather than through a regular government ministry, stipulated that the community would have to provide the gasoline for the motor which furnished the energy for the radio. So the first problem was to find the money to buy the gasoline, which cost a great deal by the time it was transported over the mountains from Lamia. A second problem was locating someone (in this case, two teen-aged boys) who could operate the complicated machine and tune in the radio. The president proudly reported that on the previous day a screw had worked loose and the program was temporarily interrupted — but only temporarily — for these competent youngsters quickly found the trouble and replaced the screw.

623 653 651 727 Before I left Phrangista, the president wanted me to see the church which the villagers had recently rebuilt. It had been completely and deliberately destroyed by the Nazis. The archbishop had given some funds for its res-

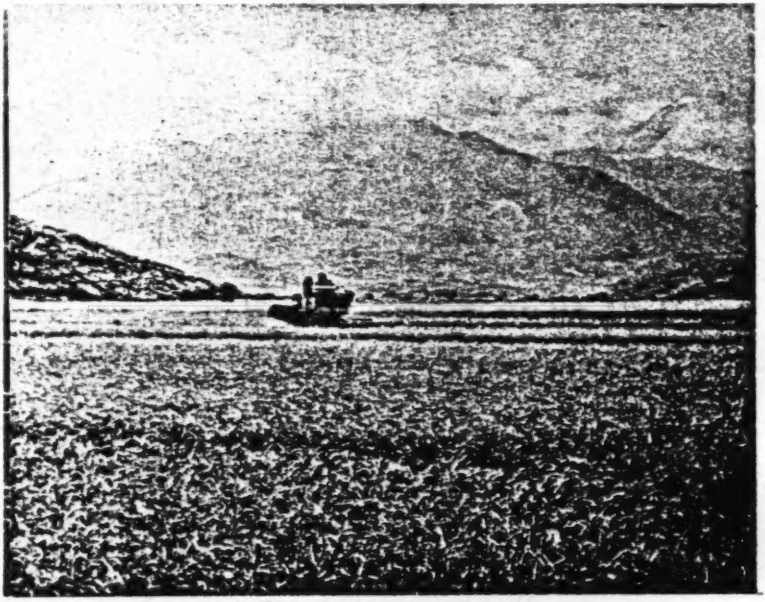
1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

245
492

6. Plowing an olive grove near Lechonia, Thessaly. The olive harvest will draw a crowd of young people to the grove to rake or beat or gather as their foreman orders.

243
133

7. A wheat combine traces the plain of Thessaly, below Mount Parnassus.



[p. 272 - D]

 Since the two

245 jobs in the vineyards must be finished quickly so that the men of the household
464 may turn to plowing cotton fields, those farmers who prefer to start plowing
earlier, or who have larger vineyards than the household can handle alone,
[221 sometimes hire labor for the hoeing. Sons who are not needed on their father's
[248 land may work for others in the village or may go for several days to work for
relatives living in neighboring villages. In either case, they are paid a daily
465 wage of between forty and sixty drachmas (thirty drachmas equal one dollar)
[436 and get their board as well. It requires three man-days of labor to hoe one
strema of vineyard. Hiring labor for this is considered expensive. Farmers with
461 fewer land resources may, in order to avoid the extra expense, ask their wives to
[558 do some hoeing. Although such a procedure is frowned on in Vasilika, a farmer
[462 considers the practical necessities of his situation as more important than any
possible loss of prestige. Moreover, village opinion itself recognizes the force of
[626 a man's practical needs, and tempers criticism to the nature of the specific cir-
cumstances. This phenomenon is characteristic of Vasilika and will be mentioned
again.

The vines continue to need some attention from time to time until the
grapes have ripened. Wine-making begins in September with the gathering of
279 the grapes. September itself used to be called *triyitis* (the time of the grape har-
[221 vest). It is an occasion much enjoyed, since men, women, and children all pick the
grapes together, talk and joke as they do so, and eat a little of the produce be-
[571 sides. Four or five people can pick the yield of the two *stremata* in a few hours.
[461 The pack animals carry baskets of grapes back to the house. After making cer-
tain that there are no leaves among the fruit, the men of the household wash
[492 their feet and then trample the grapes. The must collects in shallow basins and
[445 is transferred to barrels. A sample of must from each barrel (the usual house-
hold's yield is two barrels) is taken to a chemist in town to check whether sugar
[465 or alcohol or both may be needed. Payment for this service is made according to
the weight of the wine the farmer will treat as a result of the chemist's advice.
Besides adding the recommended quantities of sugar and white alcohol to the
must, the farmers also add enough resin to make up two percent of the contents
[443 of the barrels. Resin is sold by vendors who circulate among the villages in
[314 trucks during the wine-making season. The resin gives the wine of the Greek
countryside its name, *retsina,* and its characteristic flavor. In classical times the
ancient Greeks and later the Romans added resin to the must as a wine pre-
servative. It still has this function, but to the present villagers, as to the ancients,
the resinated wine has a pleasing taste and, in Vasilika, is much preferred to
[123 nonresinated wines. We once started to serve a bottled Greek nonresinated wine
in our village home but we were quickly informed by our village guests that it
was poor indeed, and one of our visitors left the table to go home to bring a
carafe of his own superior wine. Those to whom drinking a mild form of tur-
pentine seems unpalatable at first can develop, as we discovered, a taste for
retsina and come to enjoy it very much.

243
427 Wheat fields are plowed and sown in the fall, in late October and early
407 November. A farmer can plow his wheat fields with a horse or two pulling a
492
[221]

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

steel plow, or he can hire a tractor to do the job. The hiring of the tractor includes fuel and the services of a tractor operator.

Two farmers in Vasilika own tractors—one made the purchase in 1952 (a British Ferguson), the other in 1956 (a British Fordson). They were bought on the installment plan with credit extended by the Agricultural Bank of Greece. The tractor operators are a son and a nephew, respectively, of each of the owners. Both of the farmers who purchased tractors have landholdings which are large for the region, perhaps as many as sixty *stremata* but divided into tracts of some ten to twenty *stremata* each. Even if the land were not divided into such small parcels, there would not be enough return on so little land for economically sound use of a tractor. Both the bank management and the farmers are well aware of this, so that credit for the purchase of the machinery is given with the understanding that the owner will use the tractor as a capital investment and earn income from it by renting it out.

Farmers decide to hire or not to hire a tractor for the fall plowing on the basis of practical considerations of the moment. If weather conditions have been normal in the late summer and early fall, a farmer will be more likely to proceed with his horse-drawn plowing. If, however, early rains have delayed the cotton picking and all hands are needed in the cotton fields when the wheat fields should be plowed, a farmer may hire a tractor to be sure that the job gets done before the winter rains. Most of the farmers maintain a horse to use as a pack animal, in any case, so that it is obviously cheaper to plow with the horse. For increased efficiency, two farmers sometimes contribute one horse apiece, so that the team of horses working on each of their fields in turn will get the work done faster and at no additional cost. For wheat, the farmers say, the deeper plowing of the tractor is not important, so whenever possible they work with the animals. For cotton, as we shall see later, they believe tractor plowing increases the yield. Generally speaking, as one might expect, the farmers with fewer land resources tend to make less use of the tractors than those who can expect a good cash income from their fields and so can afford the outlay for the hire of a tractor.

After the broadcast sowing of the wheat (which is done on each *strema* immediately after it has been plowed) and the dragging of the fields, what remains is some light hoeing to be done in February and March, the spreading by hand of some chemical fertilizer at about the same time, and when the weather warms up, the spraying of a chemical weed killer by means of a hand-operated pressure pump. A farmer who does not own such a pump borrows one from a neighbor, and no charge is made for its use.

Harvesting of the wheat crop is done almost entirely by machine in Vasilika. Reaper and thresher combines, with their operators, make the rounds of the Boeotian plains villages at harvest time in June. The threshed wheat is weighed out in the fields and the machine operators are paid promptly with twelve percent of the crop. Chaff and straw left in the fields are collected by the household and made into small packages to be used for bedding down the animals. Each farmer may set aside four or five *stremata* of his wheat field to be reaped by hand with a standard sickle. He then hires a thresher with operator

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

at a cost of eight percent of the amount of the wheat threshed. This machine leaves the straw in suitable condition for a baler which is hired next to press the straw into bales for food for the horses, mules, and donkeys.

The harvesting machinery is privately owned by entrepreneurs in the towns. Simple threshers have been known and used on the Boeotian plain for a generation at least. The combine has appeared only since World War II and the hay baler only since the early 1950's. What accounts for the increasing willingness of the farmers to pay for machine operations on their wheat crop? Unquestionably, the growing efficiency of cotton production and the success of cotton and tobacco as cash crops enable the farmers to concentrate their labor and attention on cotton and tobacco production and to let the growing cash value of the crops make up for the loss of a certain percentage of the wheat crop. However, chemical fertilizers and weed killers have increased the wheat yields, and since payment for machine harvesting is in kind and not in cash, the entire transaction can be managed at what to the farmers is a minimal cost.

A household uses its own wheat for making its bread, and bread is still literally the staff of life, the basic food for the people of the village. Wheat is also used for a kind of cereal called *trakhana* and for egg noodles. It is given as payment to the shepherds, whose wives turn the wheat income into their families' bread supply. It continues to be used as an alternative medium of exchange for fish, olive oil, olives, coffee, and other household necessities not locally produced. As we have seen, the wheat straw is useful for the care of animals, and finally, in an emergency, some wheat can always be sold for cash.

A typical farmer of Vasilika reserves four or five *stremata* of his land for oats, barley, and clover. These furnish food for the pack animals not only during the winter, but also in the early summer when the animals are permitted to graze in the oat and clover fields as the crops mature. A small corner of a grain field may be used for lentils and beans, which add to the household's food supply.

The crops which most interest the farmers of Vasilika today are cotton and tobacco. Because of the dry summers in Boeotia cotton production in the region depends on irrigation. The high water-table makes well-pump irrigation feasible. This system is also suited to the patterns of the rural social structure since it requires no centralized control or authority—each farmer household can dig its own well and work its own pump for its own fields. Any man who has not yet purchased a pump can hire the use of one owned by a farmer with adjacent fields.

Cotton became a significant cash crop for Vasilika around 1936 when one of the farmers who had heard about horse-driven well-pumps set one up for himself and the other farmers soon followed suit. Since World War II, British-manufactured diesel pumps bought on the installment plan with credit extended from the Agricultural Bank have replaced the horse-drawn equipment. Diesel pumps, like the tractors, may be rented by the day and the renter pays for fuel also. The market for the use of the pump goes beyond the village itself

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)/63 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

since farmers in neighboring villages whose cotton fields lie adjacent to those of Vasilika's pump owners often want to hire the pumps. Here again, the rent income helps to defray the cost of the machinery.

Work is begun in the cotton fields shortly after the winter rains abate in February or March. Like the wheat fields, the cotton fields are sometimes plowed with horses. But, apart from the two farmers who own tractors, a number of farmers believe that the increased yield from the deeper plowing a tractor furnishes is more than worth the cost of renting the machines. Planting is ordinarily done by hand, but in 1956, a few farmers owned machine planters, and several farmers were borrowing them to try them out for the first time. The utilitarian and essentially nontraditional attitude to farming characteristic of Vasilika's inhabitants is illustrated by what one of the farmers had to say about using a machine planter. "I've planted half of my forty *stremata* of cotton by hand and the other half by machine to see which will turn out better. It's an experiment, you see." The machine planter must have been better, because in 1961 the same farmer had planted all his cotton by machine.

A few rows of maize are planted in the midst of the cotton fields to provide feed for chickens. Boys and young men like to roast and eat a few ears of corn out in the fields in late August, but corn is not considered proper food for human beings, and eating corn bread is believed to be a sign of dire poverty.

Once the cotton starts to grow, in late May and June, the hoeing begins. This is arduous labor which includes weeding, chopping up the weeds, and arranging the chopped weeds around the cotton plants as a mulch. Hoeing is done by the girls and women of the household, although men sometimes help. If a farmer has as many as twenty *stremata* planted to cotton, it is at this point that he may begin to use hired labor. Generally, the women of the village who are not busy in their own cotton fields are called upon first. These are the wives and daughters of the shepherds and the wives and daughters of the few farmers who have small enough land holdings so that their women have time left over after hoeing their own fields. When these supplies of excess labor are exhausted, farmers turn to relatives and non-kin in the neighboring villages.

The hired women who came from other settlements used to live in the house of the farmer who employed them, and used to be fed by him as well. In 1961, however, the farmers were reporting a system they much preferred—the use of tractors and trucks to bring women from the neighboring villages in the early morning and to take them home again in the evening. This obviated the necessity of housing and feeding four or five girls at a time during several different periods in the course of the cotton growing season (cotton is weeded and hand cultivated at least twice and sometimes three or four times during the season). The women of Vasilika's households were especially pleased at the change, because although they enjoyed having the company of the hired women, who danced and sang in the evenings, they very much disliked the additional work involved in housing them. After a long day in the fields, the farmers' wives and daughters had to prepare a hot evening meal for the work crew and, before dawn each morning they had to pack the bread, cheese, and olives which would provide a morning collation and a midday meal in the fields. The de-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

177 row alleys behind the handsome main streets of the city. Simi-
184 larly, in the countryside it is still possible to see groups of peas-
369 ants toiling stoopbacked and patient as they harvest their grain
• [243] with sickles, handful by handful, while, perhaps in the next field, an American combine may be observed noisily at work.

The combines and the glistening apartment buildings of Athens are very new; the donkeys and the sickles are older than recorded history. In a very real sense, the central problem of contemporary Greek life is how to close this gap, and bring the old and the new into a smooth and mutually beneficial interrelationship. Much progress has been made in this direction during the past ten years, but stubborn difficulties remain. It will require at least another generation before these difficulties can be overcome, even if peace and prosperity prevail throughout the coming years.

433 Peace and prosperity have seldom visited the Greeks for long,
161 least of all during the twentieth century. Greece was almost
648 continuously at war from 1912 to 1923 and again from 1940 to 1949; and the intervals of peace between these times of crisis were seldom secure. The wealth of the country suffered very severely from both periods of war, but in spite of economic dislocation and widespread destruction of property, the population increased fairly rapidly, from just over 5 million in 1920 (when Greece first attained approximately her present boundaries) to just about 8 million in 1956. Part of this growth was due to natural increase, but about one and a quarter million new inhabitants came to the country between 1922 and 1927, as a result of forcible exchanges of population with Turkey and Bulgaria after the first world war.

563 The effect of these exchanges was to make almost all of the population Greek in speech and sentiment, although two significant minority groups remained: a Slavic "Macedonian" population in the northwest where the borders of Greece, Yugo-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

crowd around for advice, loans, seed and the like, and begin to turn to their local village government for assistance in bringing further improvements to the community.

Let us now turn to specific cases, and see what has happened in six representative villages during the past ten years.

Villages of the Plains

LOFISCOS

Lofiscos is situated in the plain of Thessaly, about half a mile off the main trunk road between Larissa and Volos. This is a region of hot summers and cold winters, for Thessaly is landlocked, surrounded west, east and south by precipitous mountains, and exposed to cold northern winds coming down from the plateau of western Macedonia in winter. It is the best wheat land of Greece, and wheat is the major – indeed almost the sole – crop raised by the villagers of Lofiscos today.

As the visitor approaches the village over a wandering track, deeply rutted by trucks that traverse the soft earth during the muddy months of winter and spring, Lofiscos looks shabby and ill-kempt. Houses are scattered irregularly; little fresh paint is in evidence. The dominant structure near the center of the village is a half-ruined rectangular stone tower that looks like and in fact once was a small fortress.

Before 1881, the year in which Thessaly was annexed to Greece, this building was inhabited by a Turkish pasha, who owned the entire area which now belongs to the villagers of Lofiscos. The ground floor was his granary and stable; in the upper story the great man lived with his harem. Since 1881 the building has been abandoned and allowed to decay slowly. The scattered huts in which the villagers live also survive from Turkish times in almost every case. The inhabitants are the

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

621 penetrated so far into the heart of the Thessalian plain, the vil-
x178 lagers saw nothing of them at first hand. Life went on smoothly,
[669] and the market for wheat was good. In general, then, the tenor of life in Lofiscos is a thoroughly conservative one. In 1920 the villagers attained their hearts' desire – possession of the land; and since then nothing has happened to make them wish to change the way they live.

x178 The general conservatism of the village is reflected in the
241 caution with which the farmers have taken up new techniques
433 and ideas. There was no pressing economic necessity to impel them to experiment. Familiar methods and crops did well enough. Yet there are at present real signs of technical change.
[652] In 1952 fertilizer came in for the first time. Up till then no one in the village had used it. In that year, a representative of the Agricultural Bank visited the village, and urged the farmers to
[243] buy fertilizer on credit. A few of them made the experiment; the results they achieved convinced all the rest, for with fertilizer the wheat crop was nearly twice what had been usual before. Every farmer is now using fertilizer, and the net production of the fields is rising accordingly.

[652] Then in 1956 a single farmer, more venturesome than his fel-
[406] lows, contracted a five-year loan with the Agricultural Bank in order to install a well and pump with which to irrigate four
[312] acres. This represented a far greater departure from custom than the use of fertilizer. Wheat does not need irrigation in Thessaly, and to repay the cost of the well and pump new crops
[248] had to be introduced. Cotton was the answer, and the results in 1956, when I visited the village, were already so promising that several other farmers were planning to install a well-pump irrigation system in their fields, and grow cotton the next year. By doing so they can multiply their cash yield per acre several times as compared to the traditional income from wheat farming. This prospect is all the farmers need to persuade them to go ahead.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957

EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

By 1956 "everybody"
×178 was using fertilizer, and yields of wheat (the principal crop
241 for which fertilizer was needed) had increased to between 125
433 and 180 okes per stremma, as against the former range of 60
[243] to 80, depending of course on weather and variations in the quality of the land.

Even before the war, the farmers of Nea Eleftherohori had shown themselves willing to try new crops. Thus in 1947 there were modest acreages in legumes, cotton and tobacco as well as
×178 some vegetables. Only tobacco did well, since there was no
249 irrigation; but government regulations forbade extension of to-
433 bacco acreage, in order to maintain prices. By 1956 this restric-
[656] tion had been removed for the district in which Nea Elefthero-
[435] hori is situated, and the farmers promptly began to increase their tobacco planting. In 1947 there had been a total of 52 stremmata in tobacco; in 1955 there were 480, and in 1956 no less than 898. Tobacco has in fact become the main labor-consuming crop, and it has also become the all-important cash crop
[434] for the village. Money income has multiplied several times over
[241] with the spread of tobacco cultivation, for earlier, when wheat, raised without benefit of fertilizer, was the main crop, there was often very little left to sell after the families had supplied their own food needs.

×178 A second major departure occurred in 1956. With the help
241 of a bank loan, the village planted an olive grove on 900 strem-
464 mata of rough pasture. It will take ten years for the new trees
[245] to come into full production; but when they do, Nea Elefthero-
[452] hori will have a new and valuable crop, with the special virtue of requiring labor at a season of the year when other agricultural operations are more or less at a standstill. By combining grain farming (requiring labor in the early fall for planting and in the late spring for the harvest) with tobacco raising (requiring intensive labor in the early spring and for about two months in the late summer when the leaves must be picked daily and

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kardamili

[Hill Villages]

They came back to a village whose earlier means of livelihood was being undermined by new roads. As this fact became clear, emigration from the village commenced. Altogether, something like two hundred persons left the village between 1950 and 1956. Only one family went overseas, to Australia. The rest went either to Kalamata or to Athens. Among those who have remained in the village, a considerable number have undertaken seasonal migration to the Messenian plain in order to seek work with which to supplement the meager income from their olive trees in the village. The biggest single source of employment which has opened up in recent years is work in rice fields, developed in former salt marshes on the very edge of the Messenian plain. For the villagers of Kardamili these fields in Messenia have meant work and wages. Between eighty and ninety persons, both men and women, leave the village each year to help cultivate the rice fields. While working, they live in shanties or even out of doors, and return to their homes in Kardamili when work stops, or when something needs to be done on their own land.

Within the village there are variations in wealth, but no family has so much land as to need to hire labor. Indeed, the village secretary told me that the richest man in the village has only forty days' work a year on his olive trees, while nearly one third of all the village families own no land at all.

The only change that has come to the traditional agriculture of the community is the introduction of fertilizer, but few families use it. A common opinion holds that fertilizer is bad for the olive trees, and makes them short-lived by forcing an unnatural proliferation of fruit. A more sophisticated farmer told me that while the size of the fruit is increased by fertilizer, the quantity of oil is not increased in anything like the same proportion and its quality is lowered. Since the olive trees of this part of Greece are famous for the high quality of the oil they produce, which

/13 cont./ 175
the minaret was replaced by the church steeple but the storks kept 621
the same nests for many generations. No one knows so well the
history of the village as the storks do. Language and religious
differences have done more harm to humanity than any good.
Human beings of the same Creator because of language and religious
differences kill each other and take turns in occupying the village.

PART II. The Family, The focus of Megali Vrisi Life.

121

A functional study of the family offers the best method of understanding the complex behavior patterns operative in this institution. Moreover it is by such /14/ analysis that the significance of the family group in a culture may be determined.

The Economic Function.

The economic function of the families in Megali Vrisi com- 241
munity is very important and needs some consideration. Farming 594
is the only means of livelihood and consumes a large part of the
time of men, women and children. The general procedure for
gaining a livelihood has been fixed throughout centuries. Due to
climatic conditions the type of crops that can be raised is limited
and even some of these are prohibitive. A crop that in the past 249
brought them the largest income was opium poppies, a narcotic
plant, but the League of Nations has prohibited the sale of this
product. Another product that has many times left the farmer to
speculate about future prospects in price was tobacco. This crop
unlike many other crops that have followed the evolutionary type
of adjustment, has tended to follow independently its sharp ups
and downs. Tobacco, unlike other crops, involves a great amount [435]
of skilled labor and it is a product that is handled by a few manu- [464]
facturing companies that tend to set the price as they please.
Both of the above crops are prohibited. The government-subsidized 243
/15/ wheat has replaced everything. Regardless of the effect of 654
this policy on the land, rotation principles and social effects on the

/15 cont./
people. This policy of the government has created more problems for the future generations to solve than confront the people at the present. The whole family concentrates its attention on wheat raising since its market and price are definitely fixed. The harvest rush seasons has made obligatory the work of women and children. Even younger children share the burden by either bringing drinking water, caring for the infants of the family or by collecting the fallen wheat heads. It is hard to give the age at which children are expected to do their share. It all depends on how important the need of the children are.

243 ●
[654]
[435]
857
243
464

Work of Wives.

Throughout the ages we find that women, besides doing the household work and raising children, share in the farm work. The women of Megali Vrisi more than any other women in the civilized world have become the real beasts of burden of village life. They have to get up early in the morning, prepare breakfast and prepare food for the whole day. As a matter of fact it is an accepted principle that women are selected as to their ability for working hard, bearing children, working at the loom and having the lips closed. These are the outstanding /16/ qualities that every woman is expected to have. Women in discussing or in gossiping about girls express their opinion as the outstanding quality of a girl, how tight her lips are, and the amount of time she spends at the loom. It is up to the parents to look up a girl for their son either within the village or from the neighboring villages. The son has to consent to what parents decide in this matter. In many instances it happens that the young man meets his wife for the first time on his wedding day. There are many reasons that usually lead the parents to decide for the marriage of their son.

562
[462]
[581]
[521]
[584]
562
581
596

a. Need for extra labor in the fields and at home.
b. Desire of the father and mother to have grandchildren so they can train them before they are too old.
c. The desire of the parents to have someone in the house to take care of them.

/46 cont./

2. Have land close to the village which can be used for vegetable crops. 241 423

3. If the crop of one section fails, due to hail or flood, still his other fields are saved.

Disadvantages:

1. Waste of time on the road.

2. Hard to work without causing trouble /47/ to the neighbors.

3. Proper rotation can not be carried on.

4. Inefficient use of man and animal labor.

5. Trouble between neighbors either for stepping or stealing from each others fields.

6. Much land is lost for the roads and division lines.

The worst of all the disadvantages are the conflicts that are created among good neighbors because of stepping in each others fields or plowing a furrow on the dividing lines. The priest of the village, who is keen minded, found out that more cases are reported to courts due to field line differences. People who work close together often do not speak to each other because of such troubles. [578] [685]

The land is suitable for tobacco and opium poppies. These two crops have played a large part during years of prosperity in establishing class distinctions and in teaching the people to be more extravagant. 241 249 511 433

Due to surplus production of tobacco crop in the country this area was not allowed to plant either tobacco or poppies, but only to raise cereals. The income from cereals was not as high and forced the farmers to tighten their economy. The luxuries one by one /48/ started disappearing from the village. The debts that were created during prosperous years based on the yearly incomes were hard to pay back. [656] [426]

At present the organized production of cereals and especially of wheat occupies the largest part of the acreage. 243 ●

Farm Implements. The average farmer has the following implements. 000